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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Spain*

1. The Committee considered the sixth periodic report of Spain (E/C.12/ESP/6) at its 16th and 17th meetings (see E/C.12/2018/SR.16 and 17), held on 21 and 22 March 2018, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 28th meeting, held on 29 March 2018.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the sixth periodic report of Spain through the simplified reporting procedure in response to the list of issues prior to reporting prepared under that procedure (E/C.12/ESP/Q/6). The Committee thanks the State party for having accepted the simplified reporting procedure, as this procedure helps to improve cooperation and better focus the dialogue between the State party and the Committee. It furthermore expresses its appreciation for the open and constructive dialogue held with the multisectoral delegation of the State party and thanks the delegation for its oral replies and for the supplementary information provided during the dialogue.

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee acknowledges the profound impact that the international financial crisis has had on the economy and on the effective enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in the State party. In this context, the Committee welcomes the fact that the economic recession has been overcome and that the State party has adopted measures and policies that demonstrate its commitment to economic, social and cultural rights, including the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure and the adoption of the National Plan of Action for Social Inclusion 2013–2016, the National Strategy for the Social Inclusion of the *Gitano* Population 2012–2020, the Comprehensive National Strategy for Homeless Persons 2015–2020 and the National Plan of Action on Business and Human Rights.

4. The Committee welcomes the active role played by Spanish civil society organizations in the process relating to the consideration of the State party's sixth periodic report.

* Adopted by the Committee at is sixty-third session (12–19 March 2018).

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C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

Justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights

5. The Committee takes note of a number of important interpretative developments in the ordinary courts with regard to the implementation of the rights recognized in the Covenant. It is nevertheless concerned that those rights continue to be viewed as nothing more than guiding principles for social and economic policy and that, as a result, they can be invoked only after having been incorporated into domestic law or in connection with other rights that enjoy greater protection, such as the right to life. In addition, the Committee finds it regrettable that the State party still does not have a suitable mechanism for implementing the Committee's views and recommendations.

6. **In the light of its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 6), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take the legislative measures necessary to ensure that economic, social and cultural rights enjoy the same level of protection as civil and political rights, and those necessary to promote the enforceability of all the rights enshrined in the Covenant at all levels of the justice system, including by means of the remedy of *amparo*;**

(b) **Provide training, with a special focus on judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, members of the Congress of Deputies and other stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the Covenant, on the content of the rights recognized in the Covenant, including the Committee's general comments concerning what those rights cover, and on the possibility of invoking the Covenant in court;**

(c) **Carry out awareness-raising campaigns for rights holders on the justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights;**

(d) **Establish an effective national mechanism for the implementation and follow-up of the Committee's recommendations and views.**

7. **The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 9 (1998) on the domestic application of the Covenant.**

Business and economic, social and cultural rights

8. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the National Plan on Business and Human Rights. It is concerned, however, that there are a number of legal gaps, in terms of guarantees to ensure that companies comply with their obligation to perform human rights due diligence. It is also concerned that the State party's legislation does not adequately define the legal responsibility of companies, whether those operating in the State party or domiciled within its jurisdiction but operating abroad, with regard to violations of economic, social and cultural rights (art. 2 (1)).

9. **The Committee recommends that, in implementing the National Plan on Business and Human Rights, the State party:**

(a) **Establish effective mechanisms to ensure that companies perform human rights due diligence, in order to identify, prevent and minimize the risk of violations of Covenant rights;**

(b) **Strengthen the applicable legal framework by defining the legal responsibility of companies with regard to violations of economic, social and cultural rights, whether committed by them directly or resulting from the activities of their subsidiaries abroad;**

(c) **Reinforce existing mechanisms for investigating complaints filed against companies and adopt adequate measures to ensure that victims have access to effective remedies and to the corresponding redress or compensation.**

10. **Along those lines, the Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 24 (2017) on State obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the context of business activities.**

Autonomy and regional disparities

11. Notwithstanding the fact that decentralization and autonomy can encourage implementation of the Covenant, the Committee remains concerned at the persistence of certain unjustifiable disparities between the different autonomous communities, which impede the full enjoyment of some Covenant rights by persons in some of those communities. The Committee is also concerned that certain Constitutional Court decisions prevent the autonomous communities from granting, by means of their own resources, fuller protection for Covenant rights than that provided at the national level. Uniform, national solutions are welcome when they promote the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights, but are of concern to the Committee when they hinder such progressive realization (arts. 2 (1) and 28).

12. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 9) and urges the State party to strengthen its efforts to reduce unjustifiable inequalities between the autonomous communities with regard to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, by improving the enjoyment of those rights in disadvantaged regions, while not impeding the efforts of individual autonomous communities to provide, by means of their own resources, fuller protection for certain rights within their territory. Along those lines, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure adequate coordination between central government mechanisms and institutions and the autonomous communities responsible for providing social welfare services.**

Austerity measures

13. The Committee takes notes of the fact that the State party is engaged in a process of economic growth recovery. It is concerned, however, that the extended application of certain austerity measures continues to affect disadvantaged and marginalized groups and individuals disproportionately with regard to the effective enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights, and has created further inequality. It is also concerned that five years after having introduced such measures, the State party has not carried out a full evaluation, in consultation with the persons affected, of the impact, proportionality, duration and possible withdrawal of those measures (art. 2 (1)).

14. **With reference to its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 8) the Committee urges the State party to ensure that the austerity measures it adopts are temporary, necessary, proportionate and non-discriminatory, and are compatible with the core content of the rights recognized in the Covenant, with the aim of ensuring that such measures do not impinge, disproportionately, on the rights of the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups and individuals. In that regard, the Committee recommends that the State party conduct a full evaluation of the effects of such measures on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, especially by disadvantaged and marginalized groups and individuals, including women, children, persons with disabilities, *Gitanos* and Roma, as well as refugees, asylum seekers and migrants; and that, in consultation with the persons affected, it consider the possible withdrawal of those measures. The Committee also draws the State party's attention to the recommendations contained in its open letter of 16 May 2012 to States parties on economic, social and cultural rights in the context of the economic and financial crisis, with regard to the criteria for austerity measures, and to its 2016 statement on public debt, austerity measures and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.**

Maximum of available resources

15. The Committee is concerned at the inadequacy of the fiscal policy to address the adverse effects of the growing social inequality in the State party, due to the excessive share of indirect taxes as a proportion of total State revenue and the failure of certain

transfers to reach the population segments they were intended to benefit. It is also concerned that the application of tax exemptions and the inadequate prevention of tax fraud are reducing the State party's capacity to meet its obligation to mobilize the maximum of available resources to give full effect to the economic, social and cultural rights of disadvantaged and marginalized groups and individuals (art. 2 (1)).

16. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Conduct a full evaluation, with the participation of the social stakeholders, of the effects of its fiscal policy on human rights, including an analysis of the distributional consequences and tax burden on different sectors, and on marginalized and disadvantaged groups;**

(b) **Ensure that its tax system is socially just and has a broad redistributive effect;**

(c) **Ensure the optimal collection of taxes, with a view to increasing the resources available for giving effect to economic, social and cultural rights;**

(d) **Periodically assess the suitability of tax exemptions;**

(e) **Take strict measures to combat tax fraud, especially that committed by high-net-worth companies and individuals.**

Non-discrimination

17. The Committee takes note of Act No. 62/2003, which transposes European Union equal treatment directives into a diverse set of fiscal measures. It is concerned, however, that this is a little-known and incomplete law that fails to ensure protection against multiple forms of discrimination or to provide procedural safeguards or lay down adequate penalties, leaving the State without a comprehensive anti-discrimination law. The Committee is also concerned that the measures adopted have not been successful in combating the persistent de facto discrimination still being experienced by certain groups, including the *Gitano* population, persons of African descent, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (art. 2).

18. **The Committee draws the State party's attention to its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 11) and urges it to adopt a comprehensive law on non-discrimination that guarantees adequate protection and explicitly includes all the prohibited grounds for discrimination referred to in article 2 (2) of the Covenant; defines multiple discrimination, as well as direct and indirect discrimination, in accordance with the State party's obligations under the Covenant; prohibits discrimination in both the public and the private spheres; and incorporates provisions under which redress can be obtained in cases of discrimination, including by judicial and administrative means. It also recommends that the State party redouble its efforts to prevent and combat persistent discrimination, in particular against *Gitanos* and Roma, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, including by conducting awareness-raising campaigns, in order to guarantee full exercise of the rights recognized in the Covenant by such persons. The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 20 (2009) on non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights.**

Equality between men and women

19. The Committee is concerned that, notwithstanding the State party's efforts to promote equality between men and women, gender stereotypes continue to be deeply rooted in society, as evidenced by discriminatory acts against women that curtail their enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights (art. 3).

20. **The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts to achieve substantive equality between men and women and to combat traditional gender role stereotypes, both in the family and in society. The Committee urges the State party to expedite the adoption and ensure the effective, cross-cutting implementation of the Strategic Plan on Gender Equality 2018–2021, which was referred to during the**

dialogue. The State party should ensure that the plan is equipped with effective monitoring mechanisms and the material, technical and human resources required for its successful implementation, in order to guarantee women's full access to, and enjoyment of, their economic, social and cultural rights.

Unemployment

21. The Committee recognizes the efforts made to generate employment, including through the adoption of the Spanish Employment Activation Strategy 2017–2020, and welcomes the decrease in the unemployment rate. It is concerned, however, that the rate remains high and disproportionately affects youth, women, the *Gitano* population and migrants. It is also concerned at the high long-term unemployment rate.

22. **The Committee recommends that, with the participation of the social stakeholders and taking into account the economic recovery, the State party undertake a full assessment of its employment policy and make the necessary adjustments to combat effectively the underlying causes of unemployment. It also recommends that the State party continue its efforts to implement fully the Spanish Employment Activation Strategy 2017–2020, by, among other means, giving due consideration to groups disproportionately affected by unemployment; ensuring that the plan is endowed with sufficient material, technical and human resources; ensuring adequate participation by the various social stakeholders and the employment services of the autonomous communities; and carrying out the periodic evaluations called for in its action plans. The Committee urges the State party to continue to promote quality technical and vocational training programmes that are adapted to labour market needs.**

Wage gap between men and women

23. The Committee is concerned at the persistent wage gap between men and women, the obstacles faced by women in accessing career opportunities in the same conditions as men and the failure to implement fully the principle of equal pay for work of equal value (art. 7).

24. **The Committee recommends that the State party redouble its efforts to eliminate the persistent wage gap between men and women, as well as to combat horizontal and vertical segregation in employment. As indicated during the dialogue, it encourages the State party to continue ensuring the effective application of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, including by conducting comparative studies of organizations and occupations with regard to equal remuneration for work of equal value, with a view to requiring greater wage transparency in companies.**

Conditions of work

25. The Committee is concerned that, despite the decline in the overall incidence of precarious employment, the incidence of some forms of such work, especially temporary employment, remains high and particularly affects women. It is also concerned at the negative impact that these forms of employment and the wage freeze have on workers' enjoyment of their right to just and favourable conditions of work, as well as on their access to social security benefits, all of which affect women disproportionately (art. 7).

26. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take all appropriate measures to prevent abuse of the various forms of precarious employment, especially temporary employment, by, among other means, generating decent work opportunities that provide job security and adequate protection of labour rights;**

(b) **Ensure that, both in law and in practice, the right to just and favourable conditions of work and to social security is fully guaranteed for persons engaged in part-time and temporary employment or in other forms of precarious work;**

(c) **Strengthen the labour inspection system so that all regions of the State party have the material and human resources required to monitor working conditions effectively.**

27. **The Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 23 (2016) on the right to just and favourable conditions of work.**

Trade union rights

28. The Committee is concerned that the changes made during the 2012 labour reform could negatively influence enjoyment of the right to bargain collectively. It is also concerned by information it has received about the over-zealous application of article 315 (3) of the Criminal Code, which has resulted in the criminal prosecution of workers who have participated in strikes (art. 8).

29. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the effectiveness of collective bargaining and of the right to union representation, both in law and in practice, in conformity with article 8 of the Covenant and with the provisions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98). It also urges the State party to consider the further revision or derogation of article 315 (3) of the Criminal Code in order to prevent the criminal prosecution of workers who have participated in strikes.**

Social security

30. The Committee is concerned at the persistent deficit shown by the pension system, at the low percentage of persons eligible for non-contributory benefits and at the fact that the level of both contributory and non-contributory benefits is insufficient to ensure that all pensioners and their dependants are guaranteed an adequate standard of living (art. 9).

31. **Based on its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 20), the Committee calls on the State party to:**

(a) **Take the necessary measures, with the participation of all social stakeholders, in particular the trade unions, to eliminate the deficit shown by the pension system, in order to ensure the system's sustainability;**

(b) **Step up its efforts to ensure that everyone is covered by the social security system, including the most disadvantaged or marginalized persons and groups;**

(c) **Re-establish the correlation between social security benefits and the cost of living so as to guarantee beneficiaries and their families an adequate standard of living. To that end, the State party is encouraged to establish an effective and transparent indexation system.**

32. **The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general comment No. 19 (2008) on the right to social security.**

Poverty

33. The Committee notes with concern that, for a country with the State party's level of development, the percentage of the population at risk of poverty and social exclusion is high, particularly among certain groups, such as young people, women, the least educated and migrants. The Committee is also concerned that this percentage is higher in certain autonomous communities and that children are most at risk of falling into poverty (art. 11).

34. **The Committee recommends that the State party accelerate the preparation and adoption of the National Strategy to Prevent and Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion 2018–2020, ensuring that it focuses on the individuals and groups most affected, such as children, and is implemented in accordance with a human rights-based approach. It also recommends that the State party allocate sufficient resources to its implementation, taking into account the disparities between the autonomous communities. The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its 2001**

statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Right to adequate housing

35. The Committee is concerned that the austerity measures taken by the State party have had a negative impact on the right to adequate housing, particularly among the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups. In particular, the Committee is concerned at the shortage of social housing stock; the worsening shortage of affordable housing, particularly in the private market, as a result of excessively high prices; and the lack of adequate protection of security of tenure. It is also concerned at the significant number of households that do not have adequate housing and the large number of homeless persons (art. 11).

36. **Based on its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 21), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt all necessary measures, including the allocation of adequate resources, to address the social housing deficit, especially for the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups, including persons and households with low incomes, young people, women and persons with disabilities;**

(b) **Take necessary measures to regulate the private housing market in order to improve the accessibility, availability and affordability of adequate housing for persons with low incomes;**

(c) **Review its tenancy legislation and make the necessary amendments to ensure adequate protection for security of tenure and to provide for effective judicial mechanisms that guarantee protection of the right to adequate housing;**

(d) **Take corrective measures in order to resolve the problem of substandard housing;**

(e) **Take immediate measures, including the allocation of appropriate funds to the authorities of the autonomous communities, to ensure the adequate availability of shelters, including emergency shelters and hostels.**

Evictions

37. While the Committee takes note of the measures adopted by the State party to prevent evictions owing to foreclosures or to the failure to pay rent, it remains concerned about the absence of an adequate legislative framework that provides statutory legal and procedural safeguards for the persons affected (art. 11).

38. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 22) and calls upon the State party to adopt a legislative framework that establishes appropriate requirements and procedures to be followed for conducting evictions or forced evictions, incorporates principles of reasonableness and proportionality and provides statutory legal and procedural safeguards for the persons affected, ensuring that they have access to compensation or alternative suitable accommodation, are given a sufficient and reasonable notice period when informed of eviction orders and have access to an effective legal remedy. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt a protocol for evictions that provides for proper coordination between the courts and the local social services, as well as among the social services themselves, in order to offer adequate protection to persons at risk of being made homeless as a result of eviction. The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 7 (1997) on forced evictions.**

Migrants and asylum seekers

39. The Committee is concerned at the difficulties faced by migrants, asylum seekers and refugees with regard to the enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights, in particular the right to an adequate standard of living. The Committee is particularly

concerned at the inadequate living conditions of migrants and asylum seekers in temporary migrant reception centres in Ceuta and Melilla (arts. 2 and 11).

40. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt specific measures to promote the social integration of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, in order to ensure their enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights, in particular access to employment, education, housing and health. The Committee also urges the State party to step up its efforts to ensure adequate living conditions for migrants and asylum seekers in temporary migrant reception centres in Ceuta and Melilla.**

Right to health

41. The Committee is concerned at the regressive effect on the right to health of Royal Decree-Law No. 16/2012 of 20 April 2012 on urgent measures to guarantee the sustainability of the national health system, which limits the access of irregular migrants to health-care services and has led to a decrease in the quality of such services and to an increase in the disparities between the autonomous communities. The Committee is also concerned that no comprehensive impact assessment has been carried out with regard to this law and that the law is not considered to be temporary (art. 12).

42. **In accordance with its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 19), the Committee urges the State party to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the impact that the application of Royal Decree-Law No. 16/2012 has had on the right to the highest attainable standard of health, in order to make necessary adjustments to ensure the availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability and quality of health-care services, including the repeal of provisions whose effect has been to weaken the protection of the right to health. In addition, the Committee urges the State party to take the necessary steps to ensure that irregular migrants have access to all necessary health-care services, without discrimination, in accordance with articles 2 and 12 of the Covenant. The Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 14 (2000) on the right to the highest attainable standard of health.**

Right to sexual and reproductive health

43. The Committee remains concerned at the difficulties faced by women in accessing sexual and reproductive health information and services, including voluntary termination of pregnancy and emergency contraception, owing to such factors as the negative impact of Royal Decree-Law No. 16/2012 and the lack of an effective mechanism to ensure access to abortion in cases where physicians or other medical staff choose to exercise conscientious objection. The Committee is also concerned that Organic Law No. 11/2015 limits access to abortion for girls between the ages of 16 and 18 and women with disabilities by requiring the express consent of their legal representative (art. 12).

44. **Based on its previous recommendation (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, para. 24), the Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) **Ensure, in practice, the accessibility and availability of sexual and reproductive health services for all women and adolescents, giving due consideration to disparities between autonomous communities;**

(b) **Establish an appropriate mechanism to ensure that women's access to sexual and reproductive health services, in particular voluntary termination of pregnancy, is not, in practice, impeded by the exercise of conscientious objection;**

(c) **Eliminate disparities in the distribution of emergency contraception and take the necessary steps to ensure the accessibility, availability and affordability of emergency contraception for all women and adolescents in the State party;**

(d) **Consider removing the requirement for adolescent girls between the ages of 16 and 18 and women with limited legal capacity to obtain the express consent of their legal representative in order to access voluntary termination of pregnancy;**

(e) **Ensure that comprehensive and age-appropriate sexual and reproductive education for both sexes is integrated into primary and secondary school curricula.**

45. **The Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 22 (2016) on the right to sexual and reproductive health.**

Right to education

46. While recognizing the efforts made by the State party to improve the quality of education, the Committee remains concerned about:

(a) The high dropout and repetition rates in secondary education. In spite of its decline, the dropout rate remains the second highest in the European Union and disproportionately affects students from the most disadvantaged groups, especially *Gitano*, Roma and migrant children and adolescents, as well as those with lower incomes;

(b) The impact of austerity measures on the effective access to and quality of education in certain autonomous communities, particularly those where the risks of poverty and social exclusion are higher;

(c) The persistence of school segregation, which, in some cases, is a consequence of residential segregation and particularly affects disadvantaged and minority groups, such as *Gitanos* and migrants (art. 13).

47. **In accordance with its previous recommendations (E/C.12/ESP/CO/5, paras. 26 and 27), the Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) **Further reduce the high dropout and repetition rates in secondary education by adopting a strategy that addresses the socioeconomic factors which may influence decisions to leave education prematurely, and give due consideration to the groups most affected, in particular *Gitano*, Roma and migrant children and adolescents, as well as those with lower incomes;**

(b) **Ensure sustained and sufficient economic and budgetary investment in education, particularly in those autonomous communities where the risks of poverty and social exclusion are higher, in order to guarantee access to quality education;**

(c) **Intensify its efforts to combat school segregation, including in cases in which it results from residential segregation, which disproportionately affects *Gitano*, Roma and migrant children and adolescents.**

48. **The Committee refers the State party to its general comment No. 13 (1999) on the right to education.**

Cultural rights

49. The Committee is concerned about the negative impact that budget cuts, implemented in the context of the economic crisis, have had on the enjoyment of cultural rights, in particular on the promotion and dissemination of science and culture. The Committee is also concerned that, notwithstanding the efforts made in this direction, the dissemination and promotion of the cultural identity and historical legacy of the *Gitano* population remain limited. Furthermore, the Committee regrets not having received specific information on the measures taken to ensure access to the benefits of scientific progress, including the Internet (art. 15).

50. **The Committee recommends that the State party pursue its efforts, including through increased budget allocation, to promote the development and dissemination of science and culture. In particular, it urges the State party to encourage the promotion, preservation, expression and dissemination of the cultural identity and historical legacy of the *Gitano* population. It also recommends that the State party take the necessary measures to continue promoting the accessibility and affordability of cultural activities, as well as the enjoyment of the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, including the Internet.**

D. Other recommendations

51. **The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.**

52. **The Committee recommends that the State party take its obligations under the Covenant fully into account and ensure the full enjoyment of the rights recognized therein when implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level, relying on international assistance and cooperation where necessary. Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals would be significantly facilitated by the State party establishing independent mechanisms to monitor progress and treating beneficiaries of public programmes as rights holders who can claim entitlements. Implementing the Goals on the basis of the principles of participation, accountability and non-discrimination would ensure that no one is left behind.**

53. **The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to progressively develop and apply appropriate indicators on the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights in order to facilitate an assessment of the State party's progress in fulfilling its obligations under the Covenant with regard to various segments of the population. In that context, the Committee refers the State party to, inter alia, the conceptual and methodological framework on human rights indicators developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (HRI/MC/2008/3).**

54. **The Committee requests that the State party disseminate the present concluding observations widely at all levels of society and among public officials, judicial authorities, legislators, lawyers, the Ombudsman's Office and civil society organizations, and that it inform the Committee in its next periodic report about the steps taken to implement them. The Committee also encourages the State party to seek the participation of civil society organizations in discussions held at the national level in the follow-up to the present concluding observations prior to the submission of its next periodic report.**

55. **Pursuant to the Committee's procedure for following up on concluding observations, the State party is requested to provide information, within 18 months of the adoption of the present concluding observations, on the action taken to give effect to the recommendations made by the Committee in paragraphs 14 (Austerity measures), 38 (Evictions) and 42 (Right to health).**

56. **The Committee requests the State party to submit its seventh periodic report by 31 March 2023. To that end, and given that the State party has accepted the simplified reporting procedure, the Committee will, in due course, transmit to it a list of issues prior to the submission of the report. The State party's replies to that list will constitute its seventh periodic report to be submitted in accordance with article 16 of the Covenant. In addition, it invites the State party to update its common core document, as necessary, in accordance with the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, chap. I).**